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LATE NEWS 1/

Subcommittees dealing with the three principal questions before the fifth meeting of the International Cotton Advisory Committee, currently meeting in Washington, expect to have their reports ready for the Committee's discussion Tuesday, May 14, so that the Committee may be able to complete its work as early as May 15. The subcommittee headed by S. K. Kirpalani of India is drafting the Committee's report on the world cotton situation. The subcommittee headed by C. D. Walker of the United States is considering the report of the Cotton Study Group on the question of an international cotton commodity agreement. The subcommittee headed by R. D. Fennelly of the United Kingdom is considering the Study Group's recommendation that the International Cotton Advisory Committee be continued on a more permanent and formal basis. Twenty-seven countries, producers or importers of cotton, are represented.

Poland's estimated 1945 and 1946 gross production of major crops within present boundaries, according to official statistics, are as follows: wheat, 621,000 and 527,000 short tons; barley, 770,000 and 660,000 short tons; rye 2,500,000 and 3,000,000 short tons; oats 1,100,000 and 990,000 short tons; and potatoes, 1,400,000. and 1,500,000 short tons. UNRRA estimates the average number of calories available during May for 13 million non-self-suppliers to be 1,000 compared with 1,450 in April.

The food supply situation in Czechoslovakia, in contrast with most other countries in Europe, is relatively favorable. The only products of which there are any real shortages are meats and fats. During the period of occupation by the Allies the consumption of food by the Russian army constituted a serious drain on the food resources of the civilian population. This condition no longer exists. The export sale of approximately 50,000 tons of seed potatoes within the past month provides a definite indication of sufficiency both for the current period and the future.

Highlights in the Philippine food situation as of May 1 were reported as follows: Rice stocks remaining from the 1945-46 crop estimated at 550 million pounds are sufficient for 60 days' consumption. Future arrivals of rice against import allocations, placed at 220 million pounds, making a total of 770 million pounds in sight, or sufficient for 80 days' consumption. Relative to sugar, the centrifugal output for the season now ending is estimated at 15,000 short tons. The total supply of all sugars is estimated at less than half the consumption requirements. Canned milk supplies are adequate but not abundant. Edible fats are regarded as tight but not critical. Supplies of canned goods, including vegetables, fruits, meats, and dried fruits in general are adequate and some items are abundant. Supplies of dome tic vegetables, fruits, root crops, and corn are tight and diminishing rapidly. Output of fresh meat and fish is less than half the prewar levels. Present difficulties are attributable to Manila port congestion which is impeding the discharge of foodstuffs, and to the costly local transportation which is handicapping the movement of foodstuffs to isolated areas.

Note: The world cotton report scheduled for this week will appear in the next issue.

1/ This section is continued on page 292.

COMMODITY DEVELOPMENTS

GRAINS, GRAIN PRODUCTS, AND FEEDS

CUBAN RICE IMPORTS LESS THAN YEAR AGO

Rice arrivals into Cuba during August-March of the 1945-46 marketing year equaled 315 million pounds, compared with 336 million during the same period of the preceding year. In proportion, receipts from the United States gained to 83 percent of the total, while imports from Ecuador were only one-half those of 1944-45. Some rice was obtained from new American sources, about 4 million pounds being imported each from the Dominican Republic and Colombia, and relatively small quantities from Surinam, Nicaragua, and Haiti.

CUBA: Rice arrivals, August-March, 1945-46 with comparisons

Area or country	Average	August-July		August-March	
	1937-1941	1943-44	1944-45	1944-45	1945-46
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds
Orient	201	0	0	0	0
United States	232	307	339	269	263
Ecuador	1	86	70	65	33
Chile	0	28	9	2	9
Others	1	1	0	0	10
Total	435	422	418	336	315

Compiled from preliminary figures of ships' manifests, except for 1937-1941, which are official.

The greatest scarcity of rice in Cuba this year is expected to develop during the summer months. The remainder of the United States 1945-46 allocation is considerably less than consumption requirements and the maintenance of Cuba's ceiling prices makes unprofitable the purchasing of higher-priced rice in Latin America. Rice shortages were reported in widely separated parts of Cuba during the latter part of April.

SPAIN'S RICE SUPPLIES REPORTED INADEQUATE

Spain's small rice harvest in 1945 together with the lack of imports this year caused a reduction in supplies during 1946 substantially below normal consumption requirements, according to a report from Valencia. Current stocks are low and further supplies are not expected to be

available until the new crop is harvested in September. Unofficial estimates of 1945 production are around 10 million bushels (300 million pounds milled), compared with 12 million bushels (350 million pounds)for the year before.

Prospects appear favorable for an increase in 1946 rice production. Rainfall is already believed sufficient to guarantee adequate water for irrigation, and some increase is expected in the availability of fertilizers. Even if the gain in the crop does materialize as anticipated, however, rice supplies next year will not be sufficient to meet the demand. Rice exports from Spain during pre-Civil War (1930-1934) years averaged 70 million pounds, and average domestic utilization amounted to about 350 million pounds.

COSTA RICA HARVESTS
RECORD RICE CROP

The record 1945 Costa Rican rice crop amounted to 967,000 bushels (28 million pounds milled), 35 percent larger than the small production of 635,000 bushels (19 million pounds) in the preceding year. This country usually imports from 5 to 10 million pounds of rice annually, but as a result of the increased production this year, some authorities believe that current supplies may be sufficient for consumption during 1946.

COSTA RICA: Rice production, imports, and apparent utilization, average 1937-1941, annual 1943-1945

Year	Production		Imports a/	Apparent utilization a/
	Rough	Milled		
	1,000 bushels	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds
Average 1937-1941	752	22	17	39
1943	670	20	10	30
1944	635	19	8	27
1945	967	28	-	-

Compiled from official sources.
a/ Milled rice for calendar year following harvest.

TOBACCO

AUSTRALIA'S TOBACCO
PRODUCTION DECLINES

Australia's 1945-46 tobacco production is estimated at about 2.7 million pounds from 4,050 acres, compared with 3.1 million pounds from 4,774 acres during the previous season, according to a report from the American Consulate General in Sydney. From 1939-40 through 1943-44,

tobacco production averaged 5.5 million pounds annually from 7,983 acres. Most of the tobacco produced in Australia consists of flue-cured types for use in blending with imported leaf in the manufacture of cigarettes and pipe mixtures.

The recent decline in production is attributed to lower acreages, labor shortages, and smaller yields resulting from disease and insect damage. Many former tobacco growers have turned to the cultivation of vegetables which are bringing more favorable returns than tobacco. Although the Australian Government has endeavored to encourage tobacco production through price subsidies and other measures, plantings actually have decreased. Postwar plans call for extensive irrigation projects, scientific selection of areas suitable for tobacco cultivation, and the introduction of new varieties -- all with a view towards increasing the country's outturn of leaf and improving quality. Australia still depends, however, upon foreign sources of supply for the bulk of its tobacco requirements.

In 1945, Australia imported a total of 26.3 million pounds of leaf tobacco, of which 23.2 million or 88 percent, were from the United States. Most of the remainder was imported from Southern Rhodesia. In 1944, the United States supplied 95 percent of Australia's total imports of leaf. During the period 1935-1939, the country's leaf imports averaged about 21 million pounds annually.

AUSTRALIA: Imports of leaf tobacco, 1942-1945

County of origin	1942	1943	1944	1945
	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds
United States	16,562	27,083	24,411	23,177
Southern Rhodesia	1,135	1,535	356	3,003
Canada	-	247	654	-
British India	906	1,828	85	-
Other	430	103	185	147
Total	19,033	30,796	25,691	26,327

Compiled from consular sources.

Imports of tobacco products, other than cigarettes, in 1945 totaled 265,000 pounds, compared with 142,000 pounds in 1944. Most of the products were of United States origin, and consisted of smoking and chewing tobacco destined for use of the Commonwealth Government, representatives of other governments stationed in Australia, or for reexport. Imports of cigarettes in 1945, largely from India, amounted to 170,000 pounds. Exports of tobacco products other than cigarettes in 1945, chiefly to nearby Pacific Islands and armed forces stationed overseas, amounted to 1.9 million pounds. Exports of cigarettes totaled 988,000 pounds.

Australia's tobacco-manufacturing industry consists of 25 factories, located principally in Victoria and New South Wales. The concerns have a total of about 5,000 employees. The factories increased their output of products during the war years, but supplies were inadequate to meet consumer demands in full, and rationing was begun at the close of 1940. Reports state that government rationing was to end on March 31, 1946, but a system of voluntary rationing would be undertaken by manufacturers and retailers after that date. Plans are being made to increase the output of tobacco products in Australia, through replacement of obsolete facilities, and through expansion of the factories now operating.

RECORD TOBACCO EXPORTS IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA

Exports of leaf tobacco from Southern Rhodesia in 1945, principally flue-cured, totaled a record 40.2 million pounds, valued at $17,005,000, compared with 25 million pounds valued at $12,179,000 in 1944. Exports of leaf from the country averaged 28.1 million pounds during the 5 years 1939-1943. About 26 million pounds, or 65 percent of the total 1945 exports, were destined to the United Kingdom. Other principal customers for the country's leaf tobacco were Egypt, which took 3.5 million pounds, Australia 2.7 million, Belgium 1.6 million, and the United States 1.4 million. Most of the exports to the United States consisted of Turkish leaf.

SWEDISH TOBACCO IMPORTS SHOW RISE

Sweden's imports of leaf tobacco in 1945 totaled 17.1 million pounds, compared with 13.2 million in 1944. Imports of leaf during 1935-1939 averaged 14.8 million pounds. Most of the 1945 imports originated in the United States and Brazil.

Imports of cigars, cigarillos, and cigarettes in 1945 amounted to 1.1 million pounds, compared with 1.4 million the previous year. Imports of smoking tobacco were insignificant, amounting to 42,000 pounds and 36,000 pounds in 1945 and 1944, respectively.

COTTON AND OTHER FIBERS

WEEKLY COTTON PRICES ON FOREIGN MARKETS

The following table shows certain cotton price quotations on foreign markets, converted at current rates of exchange.

COTTON: Prices of certain foreign growths and qualities in specified markets

Market location, kind, and quality	Date 1946	Unit of weight	Unit of currency	Price in foreign currency	Equivalent U.S. cents per pound
Alexandria (spot) a/		Kantar			
Ashmuni, F.G.F.	5-2	99.05 lbs.	Tallari	31.75	26.51
Giza 7, F.G.F.	5-2	99.05 lbs.	Tallari	36.75	30.68
Karnak, F.G.F.	5-2	99.05 lbs.	Tallari	36.00	30.05
Bombay (spot)		Candy			
Jarila, fine	5-2	784. lbs.	Rupee	481.00	18.52
Kampala, East African	5-2	784 lbs.	Rupee	850.00	32.72
Buenos Aires (spot)		Metric ton			
Type B	5-4	2204.6 lbs.	Peso	1710.00	23.09
Lima (spot)		Sp.quintal			
Tanguis, Type 5	5-4	101.4 lbs	Sol	138.00	20.94
Recife (spot)		Arroba			
Mata, Type 5	5-3	33.07 lbs.	Cruzeiro	95.00	15.41
Sertao, Type 5	5-3	33.07 lbs	Cruzeiro	100.00	16.22
Sao Paulo (spot)		Arroba			
Sao Paulo, Type 5	5-3	33.07 lbs.	Cruzeiro	115.50	18.74
Torreon (spot)		Sp.quintal			
Middling, 15/16"	5-3	101.4 lbs.	Peso	100.25	20.34

Compiled from weekly cables from representatives abroad.
a/ April 25 quotations for all three varieties, omitted in last week's table, were the same as on May 2.

FRUITS, VEGETABLES, AND NUTS

WORLD DRIED-FIG PRODUCTION DOWN 1/

The preliminary estimate of dried-fig commercial production, excluding farm consumption, during 1945 in the leading producing countries is 182,100 short tons, compared with 184,700 tons (revised downward) in 1944 and 176,600 tons in 1943. This estimate represents a 7-percent decrease from the 5-year (1939-1943) average of 196,600 tons and a 6-percent decrease from the 10-year (1934-1943) average of 194,400 tons. Production estimates larger than the previous year are recorded for Algeria, Greece, Portugal, and Argentina. The first two countries are normally among the most important exporters of figs. Smaller crops were reported in Italy, Turkey, and the United States. 1/ A more extensive statement on this subject is available upon request to the Division of Foreign Information and Statistics, Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations.

DRIED FIGS: Estimated production in specified countries (Revised)
(Rounded to nearest 100 short tons)

Country	Average 1934-1943	1943	1944 a/	1945 a/
	Short tons	Short tons	Short tons	Short tons
Algeria	18,100	17,200	20,900	22,000
Argentina	b/ 500	400	200	300
Greece	22,500	16,500	13,200	19,800
Italy	84,200	66,000	70,400	69,400
Portugal	7,100	12,100	9,400	11,000
South Africa	100	200	200	200
Turkey	33,500	27,500	35,200	28,600
Total foreign countries	166,000	139,900	149,500	151,300
United States	28,400	36,700	35,200	30,800
Total	194,400	176,600	184,700	182,100

Compiled from trade and official sources.
a/ Preliminary estimate. b/ Production data for 1934, 1935, and 1936 not available but an estimated 400 short tons has been used in working out the 10-year average.

Dried-fig production is not confined to the eight countries shown in table I. Spain, Syria, and Lebanon produce and occasionally export dried figs, but data on the industry in these countries have not been obtainable for some years. Practically all other Mediterranean countries produce some figs, but output in most countries is small and almost exclusively for the domestic market. Elsewhere in the world, small plantings are found in many Latin American countries, the Near and Far East, and Australia.

During the 1945-46 marketing season, exportable surpluses of commercial importance existed only in Turkey. The United States importation of dried figs has been exclusively from Turkey so far this season. Production in other countries was largely consumed within those countries, with exports being rather limited. International trade in dried figs ranked fourth in volume among dried fruits in prewar years, with the bulk of the movement to European countries.

The dried-fig industry in the Mediterranean Basin has come through the war in reasonably good shape, although in some countries the marketing organizations have been somewhat dislocated. Greece was the only major exporting country that suffered serious dislocation and damage to fig trees, but the industry in that country is expected to recover its prewar importance in a relatively few years. The demand for all kinds of food in Europe for a number of years to come will be heavy and will offer a ready market for all exportable surpluses that may become available in the Mediterranean Basin. Even though the shortage of foods in Europe is acute and may continue for some time, the strong desire to obtain dollar exchange for the purchase of badly needed commodities in the United States is expected to witness serious selling effort by some of the larger

producing countries. The United States importation of Turkish figs so far this season is the largest since the 1939-40 season.

UNITED STATES: Imports of dried figs by specified countries 1945-46 with comparisons

Country	Average a/ 1934-35 through 1943-44	1942-43 a/	1943-44 a/	1944-45 a/	1945-46 b/
	Short tons	Short tons	Short tons	Short tons	Short tons
Turkey (Asia and Europe)	771	0	0	5	1,743
Greece	682	0	0	0	0
Portugal	30	31	c/	0	0
Italy	256	0	0	0	0
France	2	0	0	0	0
Other countries	10	0	0	c/	c/
Total	1,751	31	c/	5	1,743

Compiled from official records of the Bureau of the Census.
a/ September-August year. b/ Six months, September 1945 through February 1946. c/ Less than one-half ton.

Prepared by Walter R. Schreiber

NEW CANNING PROCESS FOR ORANGES IN JAPAN

A method of canning mandarin orange segments has been developed in Japan which may be of considerable interest to citrus processors in the United States, Dr. Victor R. Boswell, assistant head of the Division of Fruit and Vegetable Crops and Diseases, Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils and Agricultural Engineering, U. S. Department of Agriculture, reports from Japan where he visited the Shizuoka Canning Company, Okitsu, Shizuoka Prefecture.

Although the factory observed was crude and inefficient in use of labor it was spotlessly clean, and he reports that the final product is of very high quality. His statement follows:

1. Pass washed fruit through steam or hot water about 1 minute to facilitate hand peeling.

2. Pass through cold water briefly so peelers can handle the fruit.

3. Peel by hand at standard peeling table, placing peeled entire fruits in shallow trays until peeled surfaces have dried.

4. Segments of peeled fruits rapidly separated by hand. (Segments could be sized at this stage, but were not.)

5. Immerse segments about 2 hours in cold 2-1/2 percent hydrochloric acid (20°-25°C.) to remove white stringy fibers adhering to outside of peeled fruit.

6. Wash thoroughly in running water.

7. Immerse segments in 1 percent sodium hydroxide solution at temperature of 45°C. for 25 minutes.

8. Remove from hot alkali and wash thoroughly in running water.

A. Naked segments are extremely fragile. Much agitation or vigorous stirring will break them up badly.

B. Washing and handling must be done by large volumes of gentle currents of water.

C. Whirlpool flotation type of separator can be used for washing and removing small fragments of membrane or peel.

D. Segments now must be handled only in water, to buoy them up and prevent breakage under their own weight.

E. A good deal of flavor is removed by all this manhandling, but the pieces are attractive.

9. Cans are hand filled from large pans of segments in water.

10. Cans are inverted to drain off excess water.

11. Weights are checked and adjusted by hand to exact weight of 325 grams per can.

12. Sugar sirup of 17° Brix is added, hot, 125 grams per can.

13. Cans are exhausted and closed in vacuum closing machine.

14. Processed in hot water at 80°C. for 14 minutes.

15. Cans wiped by hand and put in cases.

CUBA'S VEGETABLE, FRUIT PACK LARGER

Cuba's total 1945 production of processed fruits and vegetables, including canned, frozen, and high-sugar fruit products not canned, was probably around 33,000 short tons. The largest single item in the pack was canned and frozen pineapple, accounting for about one-half of the volume and one-third of the value of all processed fruit and vegetable exports. About 3,500 tons of grated coconut were shipped to the United

States, ranking second in both quantity and value of exports. The tomato pack of nearly 7,000 tons was largely consumed in Cuba. Ninety-one percent of Cuba's processed fruits and vegetables in 1945 was shipped to the United States. For 1946 the outlook depends upon the supply of sugar, ceiling prices in the United States, and changes in import duties.

CUBA: Estimated production of processed fruits and vegetables, average 1937-1941, annual 1943-1945

Item	Average 1937-1941	1943	1944	1945
	Short tons	Short tons	Short tons	Short tons
Canned vegetables				
Peas a/	30	50	80	30
Tomatoes a/	6,162	5,322	5,165	6,500
Pimientos a/	370	1,292	820	1,200
Beans, green	0	100	100	50
Dehydrated vegetables				
Beets	0	0	34	0
Sweet potatoes	0	0	67	150
Canned fruits and preserves				
Pineapples a/	5,686	14,550	9,963	8,000
Guava products	4,500	4,725	5,400	6,000
Other processed	750	1,000	1,000	4,000
Fruits in brine				
Pineapples	875	850	900	2,800
Dried and desiccated fruits				
Desiccated pineapple-guava	0	0	200	0
Coconut, sugared	0	0	700	3,500
Frozen fresh fruit				
Pineapples	0	0	250	590
Total	18,373	27,889	24,679	32,820

Compiled from official sources.

a/ Converted to tons at 41 pounds per case or 48.8 cases per ton.

CITRUS PRODUCTION SMALLER IN EGYPT

The 1945-46 orange (including mandarins) crop in Egypt is now estimated at 6,742,000 boxes, 3 percent smaller than the 6,915,000 in the preceding year but 4 percent more than the 5-year (1935-1939) average of 6,455,000 boxes. Orange production during the 1945-46 season was smaller than in the two preceding seasons, but the mandarin crop increased nearly 50 percent during the past season. Hot winds during April and May of 1945 resulted in heavy drop of blossoms and of small fruit.

Citrus fruits are grown in all Provinces of Egypt, with 79 percent of the area planted in lower Egypt, 13 percent in middle Egypt, and the remainder in upper Egypt, where the Ministry of Agriculture is encouraging

increased production. Limes are placed at 829,000 boxes, 37 percent less than the 1944-45 production of 1,247,000 boxes, and 30 percent below the 5-year (1935-1939) average of 1,194,000 boxes.

EGYPT: Citrus fruit production, average 1935-1939, annual 1943-1945

Season	Oranges	Mandarins	Sweet oranges	Total	Limes
	1,000 boxes	1,000 boxes	1,000 boxes	1,000 boxes	1,000 boxes
Average 1935-1939	3,979	2,394	82	6,455	1,194
1943-44	5,241	1,900	111	7,252	1,199
1944-45	5,450	1,348	117	6,915	1,247
1945-46	4,718	1,921	103	6,742	829

Compiled from official sources.

LIVESTOCK AND ANIMAL PRODUCTS

BRITISH AGAIN BUY CHILEAN LAMB

The British Ministry of Food will purchase up to 26 million pounds of Chilean mutton and lamb during the year 1946. The first refrigerated shipment of the season is to arrive this month. In 1945 shipments from this area to the United Kingdom totaled 18 million pounds.

The five freezing companies of the Magallanes region began operations during the first half of March. It is estimated that 940,000 sheep and lambs of good quality will be killed during the season ending about the middle of May. Last season slaughterings were unusually small, amounting to only 875,000 head. The annual average for the war (1940-1944) years was 952,000.

In recent months the sheep skins and casings from this area have found a market in the United States.

A fair proportion of the mutton and lamb exported from Punto Arenas is the product of lambs imported from Argentine Patagonia, and slaughtered in Chilean plants.

BRITISH END RAW WOOL CURBS; KEEP PROCESSING

The British Wool Control has relinquished restrictions on sale of raw materials to private merchants and manufacturers but has strengthened control of processing. Merchants and manufactures may now buy wool freely to build up stocks in anticipation of the resumption of public wool auctions this summer in the Dominion and at London.

In order to ensure that the output of cloth mills conforms, in required proportions, to essential requirements laid down by the Government, however, the Wool Control has issued a new official regulation (Control of Wool, Order No. 27, 1946). This order provides, among other things, that beginning April 15, 1946, wool tops, broken tops, noils and combing laps may be acquired by processors only by license from the Ministry of Supply. Furthermore none of these materials may be treated, used, or consumed except under license. This enforces a system of control at the processing rather than at the raw material stage.

The Wool Industry's reaction to the new order is that something simpler could have been evolved. Under this order, commission processors, who hitherto have been free from some of the more rigorous aspects of the Control because they did not have legal ownership of the material will now have to obtain three different licenses to make their operations legal. The feeling is that this means trading "by official consent" as the power lies with the Control to revoke licenses at any time.

Some measure of Control is generally believed necessary, however, owing to the fact that attractive export markets are now available free from price control, and it is feared that mills will be tempted to neglect contracts for demobilization suitings and utility cloth in order to produce more lucrative material for export.

CHILEAN WOOL CLIP OUTLOOK FAVORABLE

Weather and pasture conditions in Chile's principal sheep-producing regions have been satisfactory over the last few months, and flocks entered the fall (March) in good shape.

Prospects are favorable for the 1946-47 wool season. It is too early as yet to make an estimate of the coming 1946-47 clip, but there has been a gradual increase in sheep numbers over the last few years and a further increase is indicated in 1946 as a result of a larger lamb crop in the Magallanes area, which supports about 20 percent of the country's total sheep population. The number saved was about 5-percent greater than in the preceding season. This area produces the bulk of the wool exported from Chile.

The 1945-46 Wool Clip is described as of sound quality, clean, and well grown, but the sheep are cutting about 1/2 pound lighter than last season. No official or unofficial estimate of the clip is available but during the last few years the Magallanes clip has amounted to between 11 and 15 million pounds out of a total Chilean production varying from 33 to 37 million pounds.

Marketing of the wool clip in the Magallanes area has been slower this season than usual. It was estimated that by the end of March about half of the season's clip still remained unsold. Some farmers are holding

their wool for (20 pesos) 27 cents a pound for this year's average quality against (16-17 pesos) 23 to 25 cents (converted at free rate of exchange) grease basis last year.

Exports for the 5 months (October-February) totaled only 1.1 million pounds, or only about one-fourth of last season's exports in the same months. Chile exported 23,125,000 pounds of wool in the calendar year 1945, an increase of 31 percent above 1944. The bulk of the exports or 22,296,000 pounds 27 percent larger than in 1944, went to the United States. The next largest quantity or 782,000 pounds went to Switzerland, and most of the remainder to Brazil.

While it is reported that an adequate United States demand is in prospect for Chilean wool this year there is some uncertainty concerning future marketing. Before the war the Chilean surplus was marketed in the United Kingdom and the local trade is optimistic about the possible reopening of the European market when London auctions are resumed after July 1.

MISCELLANEOUS

SOVIET CROP SEEDINGS LARGER THAN IN 1945

The area seeded to all crops in the Soviet Union by April 15 exceeded by nearly 10 million acres last year's sowings on the same date, according to Soviet sources. The progress of the sowing campaign varied in different parts of the country.

While in the southern and western regions of the country spring came early, in the central regions, and especially in the Volga area, snow and cold delayed sowings. In the southern steppe and western districts of the Ukraine, considerable area was seeded already in March. By the middle of April, some of the southern districts already completed seeding early spring grains, whereas the Saratov Province, in the Volga area, did not begin seedings, and the Stalingrad Province seeded by April 15 only half of the acreage sown by the same date last year. Sowings during the first part of April also began in White Russia and Lithuania, and on a smaller scale in Latvia and the adjoining northwestern Provinces.

Planting of sunflower seed, the most important oilseed crop in the Soviet Union, was completed by the middle of April in the Georgian Republic and nearly completed in the eastern part of the North Caucasus, but sowing is lagging in the important Krasnodar (Kuban) and Stavopol Provinces and hardly begun in the Rostov (Don) Province.

Sugar-beet plantings in the Ukraine reached about 250,000 acres by the middle of April, compared with only 15,000 acres last year. Better progress was also shown in the irrigated regions of Central Asia, where the sugar-beet acreage plan was fulfilled from 60 to 98 percent. The

cotton acreage planted by April 15 was nearly two and a half times larger than that planted on the same date last year. The plantings of potatoes and tame hay was lagging in the southern regions of the country.

The condition of winter crops was reported by almost all weather stations of the Ukraine, North Caucasus, and Transcaucasia, in mid-April, as good or at least satisfactory. These regions, before the war, accounted for nearly 75 percent of the winter wheat acreage and for about 30 percent of the total winter-grain acreage of the Soviet Union. In the central and northern regions it was reported that the grain, mostly rye, stood the winter well.

GRAINS, GRAIN PRODUCTS, AND FEEDS (con't)

BRITAIN REDUCES FEED RATIONS

Basic feeding rations for commercially produced pig and poultry in the United Kingdom are to be reduced by 50 percent during the July-September quarter, according to a recent announcement of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Original plans called for a ration based on one-third of prewar numbers, but on February 1 rations were announced at one-sixth the prewar numbers effective May 1. The ration level now set is based on one-twelfth of prewar numbers. For breadgrain conservation measures recently announced in the United Kingdom see Foreign Crops and Markets, page 274, May 6, 1946.

NEW ZEALAND MOVES TO CONSERVE WHEAT

New Zealand's flour extraction rate was to be raised to 80 percent, effective May 1, according to a recent announcement. The increase from the former rate of 73 percent is expected to effect a saving of 500,000 bushels in 1946. Wheat imports averaged 2.3 million bushels during 1940-1944.

CZECHOSLOVAK WINTER GRAIN AREA UNCHANGED

Winter wheat and rye seedings in Czechoslovakia, excluding Slovakia, cover the same area as a year ago, according to recent reports. The wheat acreage reported at 1,101,000 acres, is slightly larger than last year's seedings, with a corresponding reduction in the rye acreage, now placed at 1,498,000 acres. The condition of the crops on April 1 was reported to be slightly above average and also slightly better than the crop condition a year earlier.

FRANCE'S GRAIN ACREAGE LARGER THAN IN 1945

Winter grain seeding in France for the 1946 harvest was somewhat larger than for the preceding year. The winter wheat acreage, which normally constitutes more than 98 percent of the total wheat area, was reported at 9,702,000 acres, or about 16 percent more than winter wheat seedings for harvest in 1945. This would, however, still be considerably below average.

The bulk of the rye crop is also winter grain, and seedings in the fall of 1945 are placed at 974,000 acres. This would be, as was the case for wheat, much below average, but an increase of about 16 percent compared with the preceding year.

Winter seedings of barley and oats ordinarily represent only about a third of the total seedings of these grains. Winter barley acreage for the coming harvest is reported at 402,000 acres, or about 14 percent larger than the acreage a year earlier. Winter oats, reported at 1,284,000 acres, shows a gain of about 8 percent over the preceding year's seedings.

The condition of wheat and rye on April 1 was reported to be good. Trade reports indicate that the wheat crop may approach average, despite the much below average acreage.

LATE NEWS (con't)

All India's final sugar-cane crop forecast for 1945-46 is as follows: 3,847,000 acres yielding 6,033,000 short tons of raw sugar (Gur). This compares with 4,154,000 acres and 6,139,000 short tons for 1944-45.

Cuba is still considering the offer of the Commodity Credit Corporation to purchase both its 1946 and 1947 sugar crops. While there appears to be some divergence of opinion on the subject among sugar-mill owners and sugar-cane producers, labor has openly announced its opposition to a two-crop sale on the ground that while the price of sugar would thereby be fixed for 2 years, the cost of other items might rise, thus reducing the real wages of sugar workers despite the fact that these conditions are adequately covered in escalator clauses included in the United States offer. There is considerable labor unrest in the sugar industry, and a number of mills have been affected by sporadic strikes, which, however, have thus far had no appreciable effect on sugar production.

Tunisia's wheat crop is estimated at 12 million bushels, or 86 percent of average and the barley crop at 3 million bushels, or 30 percent of average. Import needs up to July were placed at 2 million bushels for wheat and 276,000 bushels for barley.